

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

SPEECH OF

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 3, 2015

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2577) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes:

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chair, I rise today to oppose this appropriations measure—and to oppose the policies that it embodies.

The THUD bill before us, like all of the non-defense appropriations measures being drafted by my Republican colleagues, adheres to the budget caps set under sequestration, which require cuts in BOTH non-defense and defense discretionary programs.

My Republican colleagues have decided that applying these caps to the defense side of the ledger, where the budget authority appropriated by Congress for discretionary programs topped \$560 billion in fiscal year 2015, is intolerable.

However, they have decided that these cuts are not only acceptable on the non-defense side of the ledger, they are inadequate, and so the Republicans' budget plan would impose additional cuts over and above those required under sequestration.

Mr. Chair, what is intolerable is failing to invest in our own nation.

The Republicans' unmistakable budget priority is to disinvest in the United States, and that objective is clearly reflected in the THUD bill before us.

Let me tell you about the people who are suffering the consequences of this disinvestment.

They are people just like Freddie Gray.

Mr. Chair, the eyes of this nation saw Freddie Gray only after he was dead.

They didn't see him when he was reading from text books that were 30 years old.

They didn't see him when he was suffering from asthma because of exposure to lead paint in his home.

And they didn't see him when he couldn't find a job.

There are tens of millions of Americans who are facing the same deep and systemic economic challenges today in cities and towns across this nation.

These Americans have watched employers leave their communities and have been left with substandard schools, few job training options, and no path to the better future they want for themselves and their families.

They have been intentionally targeted by leading banks to receive subprime mortgages, or have been left to obtain financial services

from liquor stores and pawn shops when banks closed in their neighborhoods because their communities were deemed "unprofitable."

They are people who are working full-time jobs at the minimum wage—but are still left below the poverty line.

They are the millions who are tired of being tired.

Anyone who sees these people should find the bill before us today intolerable.

This bill does nothing to restore the funding cut in past years from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

As a result of these cuts, the CDBG award amount to Baltimore has fallen from \$27 million in federal program year 2005 to just \$18.8 million in federal program year 2014. Baltimore officials have indicated to me that they will be unable to fund any new non-profit social service activities in calendar year 2016.

City officials indicated to me that among the requests they cannot fund was a request for \$187,000 to help provide legal assistance for 300 households facing foreclosure.

This is particularly devastating in my state, which continues to have one of the highest foreclosure rates in the nation, and where many of the people now facing foreclosure are the very people illegally targeted by banks to receive subprime loans.

The bill before us also cuts funding for the maintenance and repair of public housing, cuts the Choice Neighborhoods program, and fails to provide the funding requested by the President to restore the more than 60,000 housing vouchers lost due to sequestration.

According to the Baltimore City housing authority, there are tens of thousands of people waiting for housing assistance in our city. And that's just one city in this nation.

This bill even cuts funding—by 30%—for lead hazard abatement. Baltimore City has one of the highest rates of children testing positive for elevated lead levels among urban centers in the United States, and the highest rates are in the lowest income neighborhoods.

As I've walked Baltimore's streets in the weeks since Freddie Gray's death, I have met countless young people who want exactly what every child in this nation wants.

They want a safe place to live. They want a good school. They want a way to fulfill the promise they feel in themselves.

And they want to know their lives matter—a right deserved by every American, not just the privileged few.

The President has already indicated he would veto this bill—so rather than wasting time on it, why don't we craft a new budget framework that will ensure every American has the chance to succeed?

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVID W. JOLLY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 2, 2015

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2578) making appropriations for the Department of Commerce and Justice, Science, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes:

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Chair, I want to compliment the Chairman for a good bill that responsibly invests in law enforcement, space, the sciences, research, our oceans and marine resources, and our weather sciences.

I also want to thank the Chairman for his support in this bill for an innovative data collection initiative to improve fish stock assessments and research of the fisheries of the Gulf of Mexico. As we discussed in our hearings, we as a nation need to utilize all available tools and technology, and work with all fisheries' sector participants, including recreational, for-hire and commercial, to provide the most accurate assessment of the health of our fish stocks, including the Red Snapper species so critical to our quality of life in our Gulf states like Florida and Texas, and so critical to our regional economy. This innovative data collection initiative will better enable the National Marine Fisheries Service and the regional council to make the most informed decisions possible about the length of various fishing seasons.

Mr. Chair, without constantly improving, more accurate, quantifiable data—data that is believed to reliably reflect the fisherman's experience on the water—our commercial and recreational fishermen alike find it difficult to understand decisions made by government to shorten fishing seasons and limit catches.

To be clear, this important new provision included in this year's CJS bill is intended to provide the National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Regional Office new tools to utilize data collection efforts from our recreational, for-hire and commercial fishermen, state and local officials, third party researchers, and academia—data collection and research focused on the unique stock assessment challenges of Gulf fisheries.

By working with our recreational, for-hire and commercial fishermen, and engaging them directly in data collection, the NMFS Southeast Regional Office will ultimately accumulate more and better data, and will begin to restore trust between the sectors and regulators.

This public-private effort will allow officials tasked with managing our fishery resources to reach the right balance, balance for our recreational fishing community's quality of life and right to fish on our waters, balance for our regional economy fueled by the commercial and

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